

**MINUTES  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
Monday, November 06, 2023**

**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** Mark Avery (MA), Tim Burt (TB)

**OTHERS:** Eric Fiegenbaum (EF), Deb Ahlstrom (DA), Colin Lentz from the Strafford Regional Planning Commission, John Steele and Susan Ossoff both members of the Public Works Exploratory Committee, Garret Ahlstrom, Joan Valentine, Bruce Hodsdon, Gene and Pat Bartholomew, Marcia Goodnow, Bill Courtemanche, Anthony St. Louis, Peggy Wolcott, Pat Bickford, Bill Taylor, Ric Erickson, and Kevin Niland.

**CORRESPONDANCE**

- None

MA noted that Selectman Wall was absent for a death in the family.

**GUEST:** Colin Lentz, transportation planner from the SRPC, came before the Selectmen to discuss his idea to move along the redesign of the Rt. 155-Madbury Rd.-Town Hall Rd intersection. It is a dangerous intersection and on the State's 10-year plan for a design study in 2028, with actual implementation far beyond that. He has a possible funding source to put toward hiring an engineer to do some preliminary work that could move the State's redesign along. He was before the Selectmen to see if they would be supportive and indicate that it was priority for the town. He noted that there is some regional significance and support from UNH and Durham. Peggy Wolcott inquired about the Old Stage Rd-Rt 9 intersection, as it is also dangerous. Lentz offered that there might be some short term "fixes," such as addressing the signage and clarification of the small island which can cause confusion. He was willing to reach out to NH DOT to see if there might be some funding outside the 10-year plan. Lentz needs an indication of support on the Rt. 155-Madbury Rd.-Town Hall Rd intersection by the end of November. The Selectmen indicated that they would decide when they had a full board. Lentz offered that the SRPC has transportation data that could be used in the updating of the town's master plan.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- MA opened a public hearing *at 7:28pm* by introducing the reasons for the Public Works Exploratory Committee (PWEC), its makeup, mission, process, and report. The anticipated retirement of the current snow plow contractor has prompted the town to look at how it might handle plowing and other public work tasks in the future. The PWEC was made up of residents and town staff for support. Its mission was to research and present options for the town to continue to provide public work services. The PWEC explored how other towns address public works, the availability of local contractors, researched the costs of personnel, facilities, and equipment, as well as hidden and derivative costs of a department of public works (DPW). Partnerships with other towns were also explored. Recommendations in the report included extending the current contractor model as long as possible, creating a minimal infrastructure to support a snow contractor or a minimal DPW, beginning an implementation committee, and develop funding for a full DPW. John Steele, PWEC member, spoke to the committee's work on partnerships with other towns where there was some feasibility, but they held many challenges. He emphasized the lead time needed to stand up a DPW, including the recommendation to continue the current contractor model as long as reasonable to allow for more time. Unless *an in town very-local* contractor was found, there would be a need for a salt and sand facility on town property. A full department would be expensive, but *would* leave the town in a better position in the

long term as ~~far as not having~~ *it would not have* to periodically find contractors and in *it* being responsive to town emergencies and needs.

Bruce Hodsdon noted that the Selectmen had set up a capital reserve fund to address the issue. He acknowledged the issue with finding contractors in the future, *needing a salt shed*, and that the costs of a DPW would be expensive. *Kevin Niland asked about RFP's with an emergency response and MA noted that the town would be putting out a formal RFP.* There were references to the town of Brookline's process and lessons learned. The issue of a road agent vs. a public works director was touched on. The Selectmen's tasks would include the need to decide on a model, address the funding issues, and discuss a possible facility location, among other things. TB encouraged continued public input. The public hearing ended at 8:00pm and a short break was taken.

- Marcia Goodnow, Chair of the Planning Board, spoke to the board's budget and the need to continue to update the town's master plan. An estimated expense per chapter ranged from \$6,000 to \$20,000. There might be the opportunity to combine some chapters. The new recording secretary is working out very well. There was a discussion on the payment for extra review work done by a third party on the 10 Lee Rd. LLC expansion proposal. Bill Courtmanche was suggested as a possible SRPC representative, although he may have a scheduling conflict. *She Marcia* will get Greg Merrell's contact information to EF as a *potential alternate membe*.

#### OLD BUSINESS

- DA gave an explanation on the ability of the town to add an extra \$5 fee to car registrations to fund road work. It would require a public hearing and an article on the ballot at town meeting.

#### BOARD UPDATES

- None

#### OTHER:

- EF explained an inquiry from the Pope Memorial animal shelter to possibly put in a petitioned warrant article for funding support.

Meeting ended at 8:45pm.

Submitted by: *Eric Feigenbaum*

Approved: *12-4-2023*

*On approved minutes, proof changes are noted through italics for additions and strikethroughs for deletions.*